

Pharmacists Join the ACC Cardiac Care Team

By Rob Plant, PharmD, C.C.R.C.

The ACC Scientific Sessions have been a tremendous resource for clinical pharmacists like me who focus on cardiovascular pharmacology. As manager of the Parkview Clinical Research Center, I have worked “hand-in-hand” with many members of the Cardiovascular Care Team to bring new cardiovascular research to northeast Indiana.

Michael Mirro, M.D., F.A.C.C., and I have attended ACC annual meetings for many

years. Because he is member of the ACC Board of Trustees, Dr. Mirro participates in many committee meetings, and we rendezvous at a variety of clinical presentations and ACC functions. Such was the case at the ACC.07 All-Chapter Reception in New Orleans, when he greeted me, saying, “Pharmacists have been approved to join the ACC Cardiac Care Team.”

As a PharmD and key member of our local Cardiovascular Care Team, I was extremely excited. To me, this is a logical addition. Pharmacists at Parkview Hospital work closely with physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners (N.P.) at Fort Wayne Cardiology.

The team care concept is strong at Parkview. **William Wilson, M.D., F.A.C.C.**, is the Medical Director for the Parkview Antithrombotic Unit, where pharmacists manage antithrombotic therapy for more than 2,500 patients. Michael

Mirro is the Medical Director for Parkview Research Center, where the team of physicians, nurses, NPs and pharmacists participate in dozens of clinical trials each year.

ACC’s team building strategy, which is now adding PharmDs, can be expected to produce even more synergy in the provision of cardiovascular care. Pharmacists will be able to contribute via integration of ACC treatment guidelines into their cardiovascular pharmaceutical care plans and implementation of the electronic health record.

With that said, I’ve been asked to describe what a clinical pharmacist is and what our expectations are of the ACC. The American College of Clinical Pharmacy describes clinical pharmacists as follows:

Clinical pharmacists care for patients in all health care settings. They possess in-depth knowledge of medications that is integrated with a foundational understanding of the biomedical, pharmaceutical, sociobehavioral and clinical sciences. To achieve desired therapeutic goals, the clinical pharmacist applies evidence-based therapeutic guidelines, evolving sciences, emerging technologies and relevant legal, ethical, social, cultural, economic and professional principles. Accordingly, clinical pharmacists assume responsibility and accountability for managing medication therapy in direct patient care settings, whether practicing independently or in consultation or collabora-



Rob Plant (l.),
and Michael Mirro

tion with other health care professionals. Clinical pharmacist researchers generate, disseminate and apply new knowledge that contributes to improved health and quality of life.

Within the system of health care, clinical pharmacists are experts in the therapeutic use of medications. They routinely provide medication therapy evaluations and recommendations to patients and health care professionals. Clinical pharmacists are a primary source of scientifically valid information and advice regarding the safe, appropriate, and cost-effective use of medications.

Joining the ACC will give clinical pharmacists the opportunity to merge their commitment to providing quality pharmaceutical care with the efforts of the rest of the Cardiac Care team. The ACC provides many educational opportunities that help to broaden our knowledge base on clinical cardiology. Medication safety and compliance issues are the responsibility of multiple professions. More specifically, I see the ACC's Informatics initiative as an area in which we will all work together to make the most effective use of electronic health records to improve patient safety and clinical outcomes.

I look forward to the opportunity to participate in the care of cardiac patients with members of the CCA team.

Plant is Director-Parkview Research Center, Parkview Health, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Realizing Expectations of Membership in ACC

By Phil Mendys, PharmD, C.P.P.

During the past 25 years I have attended numerous American College of Cardiology events and marveled at the College's focus as a consummate professional organization for cardiologists. Until now, I have maintained that view from a professional distance. Fortunately, I am now able to participate in an organization that I respect and with which I have much in common.



Given the ongoing challenges in our health care system and the complexity of patient care, the time for collaboration and engagement among all cardiovascular health care professionals could not be better timed. The goals of such a partnership are straightforward and directed squarely at the patient.

My role in patient care is to work under a cardiologist's supervision in a lipid and prevention clinic at the University of North Carolina. I make every effort to understand how my skills will complement the skill sets of other professionals — nurses, physician assistants, dietitians, cardiac rehabilitation professionals and many others. We are all engaged in a common purpose.

In the lipid and prevention clinic, we support evidence-based diagnosis and clinical decision making and then extend that care beyond the base of evidence to help patients manage themselves. Patients need support to better understand individual risk factors as components of a complex disease while at the same time, valuing an often complex treatment plan. The plan may require multiple medications along with broad-based and critical lifestyle modifications, and adherence requires repetitive support from a team of providers. To accomplish this goal, we must all work together.

In becoming a member of the ACC, I have the opportunity to represent a profession among other professionals. A pharmacist for more than 30 years, I have been blessed with the opportunity to know and work with many wonderful physician and allied health colleagues.

My involvement in industry has exposed me to a wide range of academic expertise and involvement in basic science and translational research activities. At Pfizer I have been supported in the medical community as a volunteer clinician for the past eight years. Whether it is doing medication reviews at the cardiac rehabilitation center, conducting lectures in the community during national cholesterol month or working one-on-one with patients, I am enthused about being a professional ambassador and a patient advocate.

The College, with its broad reach and focused set of goals in cardiovascular disease research and patient care improvement, is a distinctly professional organization committed to its membership and the patient community. Now as a pharmacist, I can participate in that mission, while at the same time support the mission of pharmacy practice. We have much to do together.

Mendys is Director, Pfizer Pharmaceutical Group, Medical Operations and clinical pharmacist, UNC Heart Center.